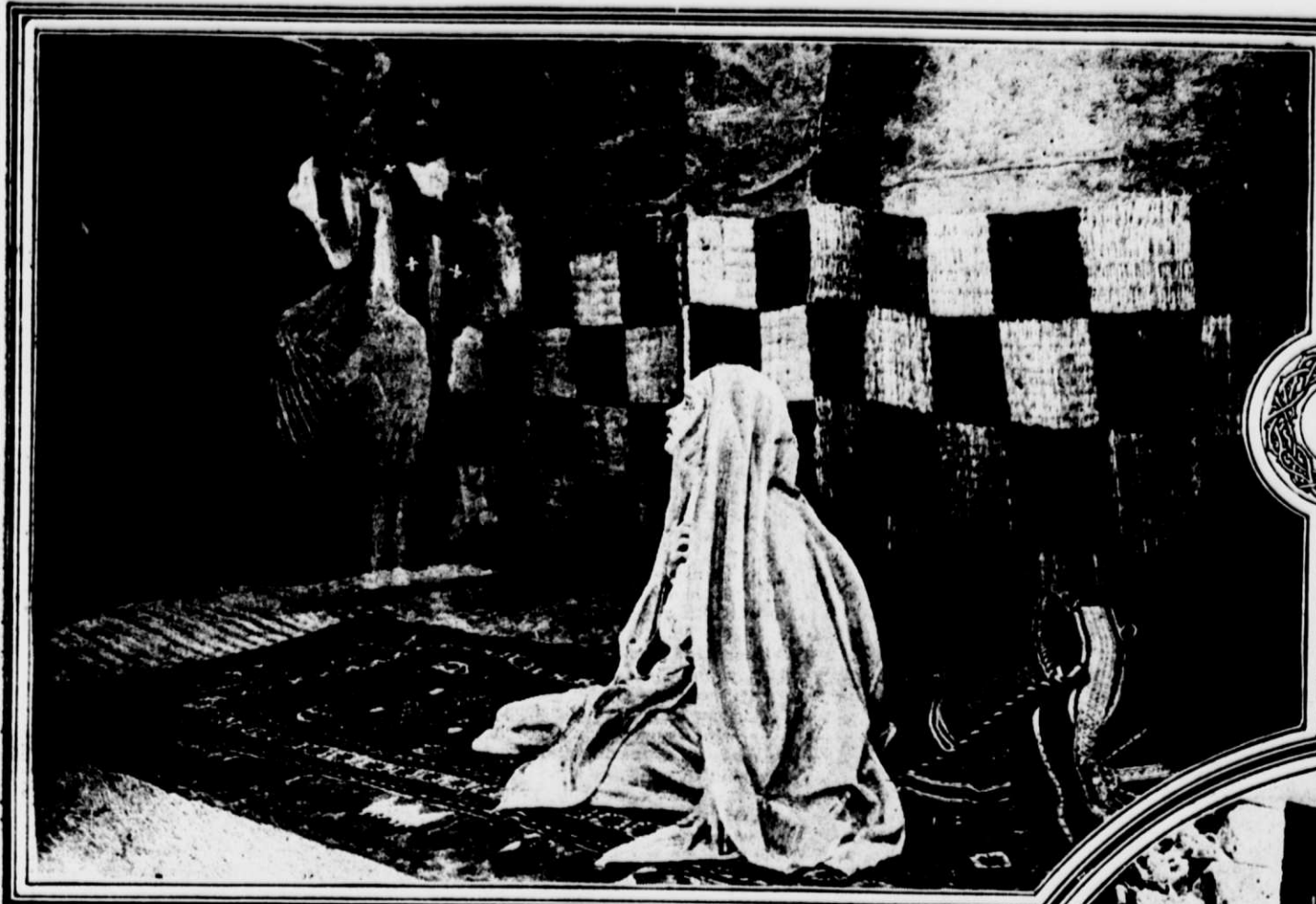


LIFE OF CHRIST MARVELLOUSLY REPRODUCED



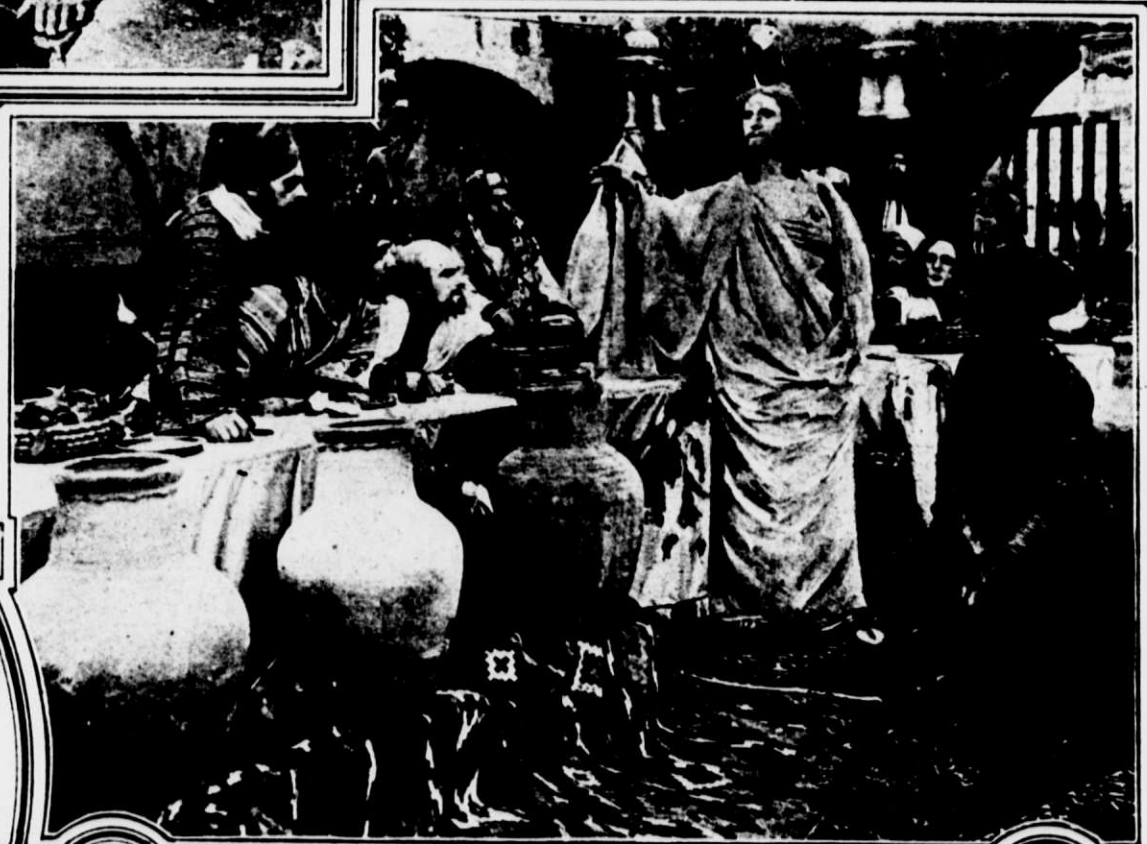
The Annunciation



The Adoration of the Shepherds

The Flight into Egypt
Asleep in the
Shadow of the Sphinx

The Shadow of the Cross

On the Shore
of GalileeTurning the Water into Wine
—Marriage of Cana—

Christ and the Money Changer in the Temple



The Anointment by Mary Magdalen.

LONDON, Oct. 5.
MR. Sidney Olcott, a director of the Kalem Company of New York, is visiting Palestine to take pictures representing incidents in the life of Christ on the scenes of their location. I trust you will do all you can to help him.

These words were part of a letter written from the White House to the Governor of Jerusalem, and the result was that over six thousand miles away from Washington a party of actors and actresses from the United States found that the Governor of the Holy City was willing to do all he could to help them.

The subject covered by Olcott's expedition was, frankly, the "Life of the Saviour." It is actually an attempt to reproduce reverently and truthfully the great struggle of the Christ for the redemption of mankind. R. Henderson Bland, the English actor, who portrayed the Saviour, has told THE SUN correspondent about his experiences.

Mr. Bland is something more than an ordinary actor; he is also a poet, and he brought to his work in the Holy Land all the emotional power and sensibility to be expected from the author of "Moods and Memories," who, in his poem entitled "Chatterton on Determining to Commit Suicide," said:

Once more with rage in my heart I'm thrown
Back on myself alone,
So to thy kingdom, O Death! with unbowed
head,
With no wild prayer late said,
I come unflinchingly, fearless, unafraid,
Like one who, having paid
A heavy price for his peace, takes with no
thanks.

"It was a grand experience," said Mr. Bland, "but an awful one. Fortunately, as I have been in having been accorded the opportunity of taking part in the gorgeous productions of Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree and Sir George Alexander, I have never participated in anything which impressed me more—impressed me both with a general sense of man's unworthiness and with a deep sense of the wonderful sacrifice which the Christ was called upon to make in refusing to avail himself of the strength of His divinity and humbly, quietly, that we might be redeemed, taking up the mantle of great suffering."

"Here on the very ground where I was walking Christ Himself had trod. Here at Jerusalem, He had endured His suffering and His tribulation. Something of the faith which makes for miracles crept into my heart when, outside the Damascus Gate, I met the mournful procession which formed the funeral cortege of the son of the Widow of Nain."

"Before me the bier was halted and the bent, bowed figure of the old woman was at my feet asking me to restore her only child to her. It was a contrast which clung to the heart, and there is nothing of blasphemy in my mind when I say that to me it appeared as if my brain, my life, my soul, had stepped back across the hundreds of years and that I had entered into the feelings and knowledge of Christ in a manner which has never fallen to the lot of any other man."

"Seventy-eight episodes were there in all, and during the two months which I spent in Palestine I must have lived emotionally many years. Of course, it must be understood that I only portrayed the Ministry and Passion of the Saviour. The childhood was done before I started, some of the pictures being taken, representing the flight into Egypt, under the shadow of the Pyramids."

"Mr. Olcott came to London to find an actor for the part of Christ during the second half of April. I believe I was the only man he saw, but I know we made our arrangements on the spot and that I left for Palestine within forty-eight hours."

"No one can have any idea of the amount of trouble which was taken. So far as was possible we endeavored to reflect the spirit of the Scriptures and to dress and set each picture in the garb and setting which were the most correct. From the paintings of M. Tisserot, the French artist who spent twelve years in Palestine, we got atmosphere and from the great works of Dr. Schick we obtained much detailed information of enormous value to us."

"We started well by setting up a record on our journey to and from the Sea of Galilee, the entire trip taking us some five days. It was at Nazareth, on the road to Galilee, by the way, that we took the first picture to be shown on the film, a picture of Mary at the fountain which Christ as a child must often have visited."

"Our first stop was close to Jacob's Well, a spot where Christ spoke with the woman of Samaria. All the time the principal actors studied the New Testament and other writings dealing with the Saviour, and right from the first my task laid hold of me in a fashion which no man made part has ever succeeded in doing. Here where I stood my Saviour

had stood before me. Upon these little hills, on this sparse grown land, He had labored and been reviled, and a man would have been less than human if he had not felt his soul creep nearer to God on such a pilgrimage as mine."

"A little rest and we were on the way to Nabulus, sitting in the shelter of Mount Tabor. In this beautifully situated town Ahab and Jezebel once dwelt in their unholy splendor, and 'twas in a field hard by that the notorious queen was hurled to the dogs."

"Starting early the next day we reached Nazareth in the evening, and the next morning we were out taking scenes, leaving for Tiberias the day after. Tiberias to-day has something of the modern watering place aspect, boasting a jetty which runs out into the Sea of Galilee."

"It was close to Tiberias that we set off in huge boats oared by six men to a distant part of the shore to take the scene 'John the Baptist sees Christ afar off.' Clad in the white garments of the Christ I walked softly across the hillside at such a distance that I appear but as a small and far off figure in the picture, John the Baptist and his followers taking the foreground. On the same waters we took the pictures of the calling of Andrew and Peter and John and James the Greater."

"From the time of our return to Jerusalem until the pictures were finished a spirit of exultation took possession of me. Earthly things seemed to slip away, and it would be blasphemous on my part were I to try to set down all that I felt. It is well at all times for a man to examine his soul, but it is a dreadful and a harrowing thing, though yet ennobling to try, even for a little space, to take to yourself the soul of the God of Love."

"The actuality of the whole performance but increased the spiritual impression. It is a curious fact that this spiritual impression was so great upon the populace that there was little or no crime during our sojourn in the Holy Land. Really it was not the natives who hindered us at all in the taking of our pictures; they were all too ready to assist us. What we had to complain of was the action of the European tourists, who tried, clad as they were in modern garments, to intrude into our groups. Fortunately it was for us that the American Government had sent such a friendly letter to Jerusalem, for the Governor kept the streets for us with police and even soldiery."

"Certain of the pictures were taken in the studio, such scenes as the turning of water into wine, the 'First Communion' and others of a similar nature being so secured. The temple scenes were built and carried out entirely in accordance with the work of Dr. Schick, the professor's widow, Mrs. Schick, personally coming and assisting us. It may hardly be believed, but some scenes which took a month to prepare were pulled down after a use of ten minutes."

"It is a curious thing to me to remember the wonderful uplifting sensation I had when we were portraying the miracles. Everything seemed so inevitable, so real. When I was preaching to the crowd in the room in Christ's own city and heard them taking off the roof that they might let down him who was sick of the palsy it seemed the most natural thing in the world for me to be there and doing what I was doing."

"When, slung as it were in a sling, made with four ropes fastened to the corners of his rush rug bed, he who was sick was lowered before me, I felt a power that was not of this earth sweep over me. I was no longer an English actor—London and things of the world and the people I had known were far from me, and as one inspired with divinity I bade the man 'Arise, take up thy couch and go into thine house.'"

"It was the same when I turned the water into wine, the same at the raising of Lazarus in Bethany by the very tomb which tradition declares is the tomb of Lazarus, and in the casting out of devils and the healing of the blind—these ethereal emotions still uphold me."

"My trial, however, was yet to come. I shall never forget the scene at the Last Supper at the moment when the agony of death was crowding upon me. The man who took the part of Judas was a magnificent actor, and when I said unto him, 'But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.' And truly the Son of Man goeth, as it was determined; but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!' I looked as I spoke to where he, nervous and afraid, clutched his legs closer to him as he sprawled upon the long couch."

"Now swift came and went the days of the tragedy, days to me of awful pain and suffering. In the Garden of Gethsemane was I betrayed by the kiss which has come down through the ages as the token of falseness and betrayal, before the elders was I hurried, from the elders on to Pilate was I carried, reviled and

Passion Play Prepared by an American Company in Far Off Palestine